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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 BUCHAREST 001644

SIPDIS

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/NCE WSILK WORTH

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SUBJECT: ROMANIA REAFFIRMS STRONG CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED TROOP PRESENCE IN IRAQ DESPITE FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS

REF: A. SECSTATE 131524 B. BUCHAREST 1609 C. BAGHDAD 3010

Classified By: POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF ROBERT S. GILCHRIST FOR REASONS 1.4 A, B AND D1. (S)

Summary. President Traian Basescu told an interagency team led by Ambassador Richard Jones, Senior Advisor to the Secretary and Coordinator for President Basescu: Unconditional Commitment to Iraq ----- --

12. (C) Ambassador Jones initiated the meeting with President Basescu, accompanied by State Counselor for National Security General Constantin

13. (C) Basescu stated that the GOR faces deep budgetary problems in the wake of recent severe flooding across Romania (Ref B). He characterize anticipates spending USD 100 million on flood related activities. Flood relief costs have placed tremendous pressures on the armed forces' budg

14. (C) Basescu explained that the armed forces face another "major problem" - delays in planned MOD modernization and reform this year and in

15. (C) Basescu immediately added, however, "we will not put any condition on participation in Iraq and Afghanistan if support cannot be increa

16. (C) Ambassador Jones expressed appreciation for Basescu's realistic assessment of the need for a continued Multinational Force (MNF) preser Basescu Proposes Possible Gendarme Training

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17. (C) Basescu stated he had spoken with the Romanian Interior Minister Vasile Blaga regarding possible additional contributions Romania could outlined possible training modalities. Basescu affirmed that although Romania is a small country with "limited resources" it will remain a "sol Debt Reduction Pledge

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18. (C) President Basescu stated that following a recent Paris Club agreement Romania has decided to reduce its Iraq debt (which totals USD 2.6 Romanian Access to Security Detainee Munaf

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19. (S) Basescu raised the subject of Iraqi-American national Mohammed Munaf, now held as a security internee by Coalition Forces in Iraq under Committed - But Cautious - Defense Ministry

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10.(C) In a separate meeting at the MOD, Defense Minister Teodor Atanasiu, accompanied by State Secretary for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Def

11. (C) Atanasiu iterated that "we will maintain our forces in Iraq until the Iraqi forces can take over" but Romania must consider various of

12.(C) The CHOD added that the MOD needs to justify its activities in a post flood environment, which means telling the Romanian people either The Centrality of a UN Mandate

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13.(SBU) Following a working lunch with MFA officials, MFA Director General for Global Affairs Stelian Stoian chaired an interagency working gr

14.(C) MFA State Secretary for Global Affairs Teodor Baconschi, the de facto number two Foreign Ministry official, joined the interagency meeti Engaging Reluctant Europeans

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15.(C) Baconschi asked about the possible impact on USG relations with "new" European states that have "announced their intention to withdraw,"

16.(C) DG Stoian stressed that the GOR, an EU aspirant, now participates in the EU working group addressing the development of an EU common for UN Force Protection

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17.(C) During the interagency meeting, Ambassador Jones highlighted the importance of Romania's contributions to UN force protection, noting th

18.(C) Comment. The GOR has demonstrated steady progress on its defense modernization efforts notwithstanding Basescu's expressed concerns abou

19.(U) Amembassy Bucharest's reporting telegrams are available on the Bucharest SIPRNet website: [www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/bucharest](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/bucharest)

20.(U) Ambassador Jones cleared this cable.

TAPLIN